

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 18536 01 OF 02 301906Z

42

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INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

CINCEUR

USMISSION GENEVA

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AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

USIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 18536

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CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 18536 01 OF 02 301906Z

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA ON THE STATE OF DETENTE

REFS: A) MOSCOW 16293; B) MOSCOW 18458

1. SUMMARY AND COMMENT. TWO MAJOR COMMENTARIES IN IZVESTIYA AND PRAVDA HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE STATUS AND PROSPECTS OF DETENTE. G. SHKHNAZAROV, A HIGH-RANKING STAFFER OF THE CPSU CENTRAL COMMITTEE INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, WRITING IN PRAVDA DECEMBER 27, SEEMINGLY DEFENDS A RELAXATION OF INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS BEFORE TWO AUDIENCES. THE SLOGAN IS THAT RELAXATION OF TENSIONS IS GOOD FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS, AND SOCIAL PROGRESS GOOD FOR RELAXATION OF TENSIONS. IN STRESSING THAT DETENTE IS IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL PROGRESSIVE FORCES IN THE WORLD, AND THUS VOUCHING FOR ITS IDEOLOGICAL ACCEPTABILITY, HE PRESEUMABLY IS ADDRESSING THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT, AND, PERHAPS, THE SOVIET CONSTITUENCY AS WELL. AND WHILE THAT PORTION OF HIS ARTICLE DEFENDING SOVIET DETENTE POLICY BEFORE THE WEST LARGELY FOLLOWS THE ARBATOV LINE (REF A), HE ALSO ADDS THAT DETENTE PROMOTES A MORE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF "SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY" TOWARD THE IDEAL OF "COMMUNIST SELF-GOVERNMENT". HE SAYS THAT AN INCREASE OF INTERNATIONAL TENSION, ON THE OTHER HAND, NOT ONLY FORCES THE "SOCIALIST" STATES TO INCREASE DEFENSE SPENDING, BUT ALSO TO "TAKE OTHER MEASURES TO PROTECT THEIR SOCIALIST ACHIEVEMENTS" -- I.E., AT LEAST IMPLICITLY TO LIMIT CIVIL RIGHTS.

2. IZVESTIYA'S AUTHORITATIVE VIKENTIIY MATVEYEV, WRITING DECEMBER 24, AIMS HIS ARGUMENTS ENTIRELY AT THE WEST. HE REPEATS MANY OF ARBATOV'S ARGUMENTS, BUT GOES FURTHER IN ACCUSING THE OPPONENTS OF DETENTE OF NOT CARRYING THEIR OWN ARGUMENTS TO THEIR LOGICAL EXTREME. ONE SUCH OUTCOME, HE SAYS, WOULD BE A BREAKING-OFF OF THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS, WHICH WOULD SUBJECT MANKIND TO A "TERRIBLE THREAT".

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 18536 01 OF 02 301906Z

3. THE UNDERTONE OF CONCERN OVER THE FATE OF THE SOVIET UNION'S RELATIONS WITH THE WEST IS STRONGER IN THESE TWO ARTICLES THAN ANYTHING WE HAVE SEEN RECENTLY. SHAKHANAZAROV SEEMS TO BE SAYING THAT THE WEST WILL BE DEFEATING ITS OWN AIMS -- AN INCREASE IN DEMOCRACY IN THE SOVIET UNION -- IF IT MOVES AWAY FROM DETENTE. THIS LINE IS OBVIOUSLY SELF-SERVING, BUT IT IS NEVERTHELESS REMARKABLE TO SEE

SUCH A POINT OF VIEW EXPRESSED PUBLICLY, EVEN IF IN AESOPIAN LANGUAGE. AND MATVEYEV'S RAISING THE POSSIBILITY OF BREAKING OFF SALT, EVEN IN A COMPLETELY HYPOTHETICAL CONTEXT, IS THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE SEEN SUCH AN EXTREME MEASURE EVEN ALLUDED TO IN THE PRESS. NEVERTHELESS, EVIDENCE OF CONCERN NOTWITHSTANDING, BOTH ARTICLES PURSUE THE SAME UNCHANGED AND UNBENDING LINE ON ANGOLA. END SUMMARY.

4. MATVEYEV IN HIS COMMENTARY (PORTIONS OF WHICH WERE REPORTED REF B) SAYS THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF A CONTINUING GENERAL WILL IN THE WORLD TOWARD A FURTHER RELAXATION OF TENSIONS, POINTING TO STRONG CONGRESSIONAL OPPOSITION IN THE U.S. TO INCREASED DEFENSE SPENDING, AND A SIMILAR TREND IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT, AS EXAMPLES. THE THIRTIETH UNGA'S SUPPORT OF DISARMAMENT PROPOSALS, HE ADDS, IS FURTHER EVIDENCE. HE THUS PORTRAYS THOSE CRITICIZING DETENTE AS OPPOSING THE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES -- BUT NEVERTHELESS LETS SLIP THROUGH THAT THEY ARE AN INFLUENTIAL AND SIZEABLE GROUP. HE TAKES THEM ON BY ASKING THAT THEY CARRY THEIR OWN ARGUMENTS THROUGH TO A LOGICAL EXTREME. ONE "PRESCRIPTION" BEING PROPOSED, MATVEYEV CONTENDS, IS TO BREAK OFF THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS, WHILE ANOTHER IS TO INCREASE RELIANCE ON "ECONOMIC LEAVERS" TO PRESSURE THE "SOCIALIST" STATES. SUCH STEPS, HE ARGUES, WOULD NOT DISTURB THE "CONFIDENT, STEADY DEVELOPMENT" OF THE SOVIET UNION, BUT WOULD RESULT IN MISALLOCATION OF RESOURCES TO DEFENSE SPENDING AND WOULD PLACE MANKIND UNDER THE THREAT OF A TERRIBLE WAR.

5. MATVEYEV PICKS UP THE ANGOLA/PORTUGAL GAUNTLET, AGAIN REPEATING THE NOW WELL-USED LINE THAT "A RELAXATION OF CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 MOSCOW 18536 01 OF 02 301906Z

TENSIONS DOES NOT MEAN, AND CANNOT MEAN, A FREEZING OF THE SOCIAL STATUS QUO IN THE WORLD". HE SAYS THAT "CERTAIN PEOPLE" IN THE WEST ARE TRYING TO FIND CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN "THE PROCESS OF DETENTE" AND "THE EFFORTS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA TO REBUFF INTRUSIONS AGAINST IT BY EXTERNAL FORCES -- PRIMARILY THE RACIST REGIME OF SOUTH AFRICA...". HE CONTINUES THAT SIMILAR ATTEMPTS IN THE WEST TO PORTRAY SOVIET "SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT" FOR THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA "AS SOMETHING 'NOT CORRESPONDING TO' THE CAUSE OF A RELAXATION OF INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS" ARE COMPLETELY INVALID.

6. SHAKHNAZAROV PICKS UP WHERE MATVEYEV LEAVES OFF, STATING THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DETENTE AND

"SOVICAL PROGRESS" IS NOW ONE OF THE KEY QUESTIONS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. RIGHTISTS DISTORT THE RELATIONSHIP "TO FRIGHTEN PEOPLE", WHILE EXTREME LEFTISTS SAY THAT THE RELATIONSHIP FAVORS CAPITALISM. IN TRUTH, SHAKHANAZAROV ARGUES, DETENTE IS IN EVERYONE'S INTEREST -- BUT ESPECIALLY THAT OF "PROGRESSIVE FORCES". INTERNATIONAL TENSION, HE SAYS, FORCES THE "SOCIALIST" STATES TO SHIFT "A SUBSTANTIAL SHARE OF THEIR RESOURCES" INTO DEFENSE SPENDING AS WELL AS TO TAKE OTHER MEASURES "TO DEFEND SOCIALIST ACHIEVEMENTS", ALL OF WHICH "ONE WAY OR THE OTHER HAS ITS EFFECT ON MANY ASPECTS OF SOCIAL LIFE". AT THE SAME TIME, INTERNATIONAL TENSION ALLOWS IMPERIALISM TO USE THE TRUMPED-UP "COMMUNIST THREAT" TO WHIP UP MILITARISM, RESTRICT DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS, AND TO APPLY "THE CRUEST FORMS OF VIOLENCE TO SUPPRESS NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS". INTERNATIONAL TENSION ALSO

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 18536 02 OF 02 301945Z

44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8283

INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

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USMISSION US BERLIN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 18536

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 18536 02 OF 02 301945Z

GIVES REACTIONARY FORCES THE OPPORTUNITY
ARTIFICIALLY TO CHANGE DOMESTIC POLITICAL RELATION-
SHIPS TO THEIR ADVANTAGE, REDUCING THE OPPORTUNITIES
FOR THE WORKING CLASS TO MOVE FORWARD. THUS,
SHAKHNAZAROV CONCLUDES, "A RELAXATION OF INTERNATIONAL
TENSIONS PROMOTES SOCIAL PROGRESS IN ALL BASIC SETORS
OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD".

7. SHAKHNAZAROV ALSO REPEATS THE SAME ARGUMENTS USED
BY MATVEYEV TO SHOW WHY PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE CANNOT MEAN
A "FREEZING OF THE WORLD SOCIAL STATUS QUO". HE SAYS
FURTHER THAT EFFORTS BY WESTERN PROPAGANDA TO EXTORT
"PAYMENT" FOR DETENTE BY ASKING THE "SOCIALIST" STATES
MOVE AWAY FROM "SEVERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE POLITICAL
SYSTEM OF SOCIALISM" ARE "LAUGHABLE". IN THIS SAME
CATEGORY, HE SAYS, FALL SUCH ATTEMPTS TO GAIN "CONCESSIONS"
FROM THE "SOCIALIST" STATE IN THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION,
PEOPLE, AND CULTURAL CONTACTS. IN POINT OF FACT, HE SAYS,
IT IS THE WEST WHICH MUST MEND ITS WAYS, REFERRING TO
STATISTICS SHOWING A GREATER NUMBER OF AMERICAN AUTHORS
PUBLISHED, AND AMERICAN FILMS SHOWN, IN THE SOVIET UNION
THAN COORESPONDING FIGURES FOR SOVIET BOOKS AND MOVIES
IN THE U.S.

8. SHAKHANAZAROV ARGUES THAT WESTERN CALLS FOR A
"LIBERALIZATION" OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE "SOCIALIST"
STATES ARE UNDERSTANDABLY REJECTED, FOR THESE CALLS
ARE REALLY ATTEMPTS TO PROMOTE ANTI-SOCIALIST
POLITICAL FORCES. CIVIL RIGHTS ARE ACTUALLY BEING
INCREASED AT EVERY STAGE OF "SOCIALIST" DEVELOPMENT,
HE WRITES, AND ADDS THAT A RELAXATION OF INTERNATIONAL

TENSION IS "AN ADDITIONAL FACTOR" WHICH "PROMOTES
THE FURTHER MOVEMENT OF SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY TOWARD THE
IDEAL OF COMMUNIST SELF-GOVERNMENT."

9. SHAKHANAZAROV ADDS THAT THE "SOCIALIST" STATES
WERE ABLE TO DEFEND THEIR GAINS EVEN WHEN THEY WERE
WEAK, AND ASKS IF THEIR CRITICS THINK THEY WILL BE UN-
ABLE TO DEFEND THEIR GAINS NOW THAT THEY ARE STRONG.
HE CONCLUDES THAT "IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND
WHAT IS BEHIND THE ATTACKS FROM OUR CRITICS WHO WISH
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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 18536 02 OF 02 301945Z

US HARM -- THEY WISH TO BREAK OFF A DEPENDING OF THE
RELAXATION OF TENSIONS AND AT THE SAME TIME SHIFT THE
RESPONSIBILITY ONTO THE SOCIALIST STATES."
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